



FACT SHEET

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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The “Lady of the Lake”

Eielson Air Force Base’s “Lady of the Lake” is what remains of a WB-29 weather reconnaissance aircraft that rests in a water-filled gravel pit just off Transmitter Road here.

In 1957 the B-29s were replaced by B-50s, a larger version of the B-29. Although the two airplane models looked alike, most parts were not interchangeable. After World War II, most B-29s were cut up and scrapped, so the parts supply was rapidly dwindling. By the time the B-50s arrived, parts cannibalization on B-29s was standard practice, just to keep the remaining planes flying.



The “Lady of the Lake” was one such aircraft. With all the useful parts removed, and with no chance of replacement, the plane was removed from the active aircraft inventory. At that time, almost all of the flights originating out of Eielson AFB were reconnaissance flights traveling over open water, either over the Arctic Ocean, or the North Pacific Ocean. Someone thought of using the grounded WB-29 for open water extraction practice.

The plane was hauled out to its present location via the railroad, and set up in a shallow pond for training purposes. Unfortunately, either because of raising water, or because the plane sank into the bottom of the pond, the water level became too high to continue the extraction training, and the plane was abandoned in place. Over the years, a certain mystic rose around the plane, and many different theories came about as to its origins, but the case of the “Lady in the Lake” has been closed for now.

The “Lady” is one of many interesting sites on Eielson Air Force Base. Retirees frequently visit the site when in the area, and people on temporary duty here often stop by for a look.

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